

SUMMARY OF CONVERSATION “GROUP OF 100” WITH WILLIAM McDONOUGH

On September 16, 2008, a group of 100 representatives from a number of State Agencies and Departments, as well as State Legislative staff (see attached), joined William McDonough for a conversation around the value and necessity of a “Sustainable California” and an eco-effective approach to strategic growth.

The group was challenged to come up with a Principle (or set of principles), Goals, Strategies, and Metrics necessary to drive the transformation to a “Sustainable” California. “Principles” express a set of values to be used as an evaluative tool to inform policy and program decision-making. “Goals” are a clear statement of what you want to achieve. “Strategies” represent how you will achieve your goals. “Metrics” provide the quantitative and/or qualitative measurements of your success.

Outcomes:

The group, in a relatively short time, generated ideas for Principles, Goals, Strategies, and even Metrics. We have summarized the most common thoughts in each of these areas with a few editorial comments. Perhaps the most significant outcome, in addition to a working overall principle, was the ease participants had working across organizational lines and traditional silos to come up with a strong consensus and new ideas. This clearly demonstrated the efficacy, possibilities, and power of integrated problem solving as we tackle this work.

Working Draft Overall Principle: **California will be a global leader innovating a healthy, prosperous society with an abundance of resources.**

Summary of Other Principles:

1. *California as a global leader* – This idea was repeated often and, thus, found its place in the working overall principle. It is important to note the participants welcomed this leadership role.
2. *Create value for “sustainable” change* – McDonough spoke of the need for “Commerce to drive change.” This principle underscored the group’s recognition that any eco-effectiveness agenda must be supported by an understandable value proposition.
3. *Ensure “species equity” – no species lost* – The group strongly supported the idea that eco-effectiveness is not for the benefit of humankind alone, but rather for all of this planet’s inhabitants, with none left out. Preserving and enhancing the bio-diversity of the planet is fundamental to the eco-effectiveness agenda.
4. *Shared responsibility* – Expressed the group’s recognition that the strategies that are employed will be fundamentally more successful if they engage a broad set of interests. This is the premise for private-public partnerships, as well as enhanced communication between state, regional and local government, stakeholders, and the business leaders that drive the state’s and country’s economy.
5. *Integrated, systems approach* – This principle is directed squarely at state government and the way business is currently conducted. It puts forth the proposition that the major policy issues facing state government are interconnected in one way or the other. It emphasizes that these are systemic issues and, thus, should be approached in a systematic way. The “group of 100” demonstrates what is possible with an integrated approach. Think like a tree!
6. *Government empowers innovation* – This is one of the concepts captured in the draft working overall principle, and it is an important paradigm shift. It changes the traditional “guardian” role of government from reactive to pro-active. With this principle, government is no longer following societal and market trends but is joining commerce as an engine of change. It already has a slogan: If this is government give me more!

7. *Californians living healthy and taking care of future generations* – These principles are somewhat linked and also are incorporated in the draft overall principle. It is one of the bottom lines for the eco-effectiveness model. If we can't live healthy lives and ensure the same for future generations, we have not been very eco-effective. It also comes with its own slogan: Yes in my backyard!
8. *Grow California into a vibrant, sustainable State for all Californians* – One of the strengths, and indeed the magic, of California is its diversity. This principle puts forth the premise that as we develop and implement an eco-effective design we must be diligent to include and not exclude any segment of California's diverse population.

Summary of Ideas for Goals:

1. For California's energy needs to be met with 100 percent clean and renewable energy sources.
2. California to become a net exporter of clean energy and clean energy technology.
3. California is the global leader in innovation, manufacture, and use of sustainable goods and technology across all business sectors.
4. To have local, sustainable (available, healthy) water systems.
5. Eliminate all waste as a by-product of human activities in California.
6. Eliminate all toxic chemicals from products entering or produced in the state.
7. Reduce the state's carbon footprint.
8. Become the biggest ecological, economic engine in the world.
9. To restore ecologically damaged areas of the State.

Summary of Ideas for Strategies:

1. Incorporate "green principles" in the state's decision-making process.
2. Tax what we don't want.
3. "Create carrots big enough to become sticks."
4. Identify disincentives to moving toward a sustainable California in current regulations.
5. Use scale to make velocity happen.
6. Promote cross-agency coordination to use resources more effectively.
7. Develop private public partnerships and a positive and clear market signal supporting green behavior by business and communities.
8. Use guardianship role to provide a level playing field for innovative business ventures.
9. Provide transparency of data and information such as lists of chemicals and their properties.
10. Move to life cycle costing of programs (or products) rather than short-term cost analysis.
11. Inform and engage the citizenry.
12. Demonstrate the impact and value proposition of eco-effectiveness with the greening of state government.
13. Design a regulatory framework that encourages more than just "minimum standards."

Summary of Ideas for Metrics to Measure Success:

1. Quality of life and sense of well-being qualitative measures
2. Incidence of chronic illness and other health metrics
3. Amount of available renewable resources
4. Elimination of waste
5. No more plant and animal extinctions
6. No net loss of farmland
7. Availability of green affordable housing
8. Quality of air and water in terms of toxicity
9. Number of toxic free products registered

Conclusion and Path Forward:

The above summary does not capture all of the input and ideas generated by the 100 or so participants in the meeting. It is just a sample of the most repeated ideas and thoughts. However, it does capture the sense of enthusiasm and truly “out of the box” conversation that took place. In fact, it in itself reflects the spirit of the draft overall working principle.

In the coming weeks we will re-convene and continue to refine our principles and further develop our goals and strategies.

As Bill McDonough pointed out, getting together was the beginning. Staying together will bring progress, and continuing to work together will ensure success.

One measure of that success will be, by November 18, 2008, to propose to the Governor a defined and sustainable eco- effective principle and set of goals and strategies for his consideration and implementation.

Next Steps:

Schedule a series of meetings of the Group of 100 to be held between now and November 18.

Bill McDonough and his team are absolutely committed to helping us be successful and will be providing us with consultation and feedback as we travel this path together.

*Don't be afraid of that big step; you can't cross a chasm with two small ones.
David Loyd George.*